

How do UU and Pagan Thea/ologies Fit Together?: CUUPS 20th Anniversary

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UUA "Fulfilling the Promise" Survey, 1997

Humanist	46.1%
Earth/Nature centered	19%
Theist	13%
Christian	9.5%
Mystic	6.2%
Buddhist	3.6%
Jewish	1.2%
Hindu	.4%
Moslem	.1%
Other	13.3%

Independent “Some UUs are more U than UU,” 2005

Humanist	54%
Agnostic	33%
Earth-Centered	31%
Atheist	18%
Buddhist	17%
Pagan	13%
Christian	13%

UUA Engaging Our Theological Diversity 2005

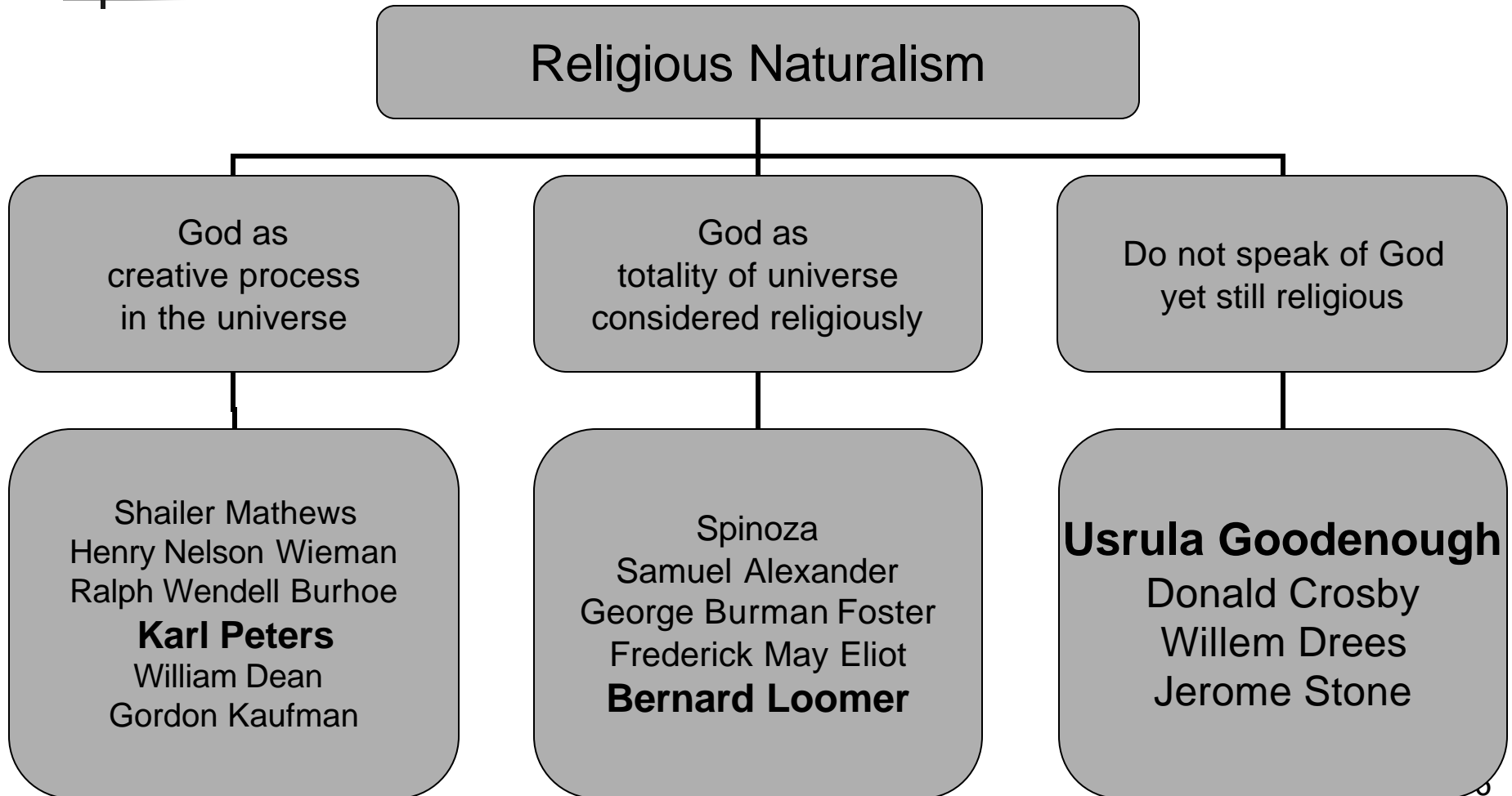
	Clergy	Laity*
Process theology (incl. panentheism and process naturalism)	32%	17%
Humanism (including Humanist-Paganism)	20%	17%
Mystic, Christian, and God/transcendence	17-19%	No data
Religious Naturalism	13-14%	14%
Buddhism	13-14%	No data
Paganism	5-6%	No data
Feminist/liberation language	5-6%	No data
Other categories		25%



Religious Naturalism

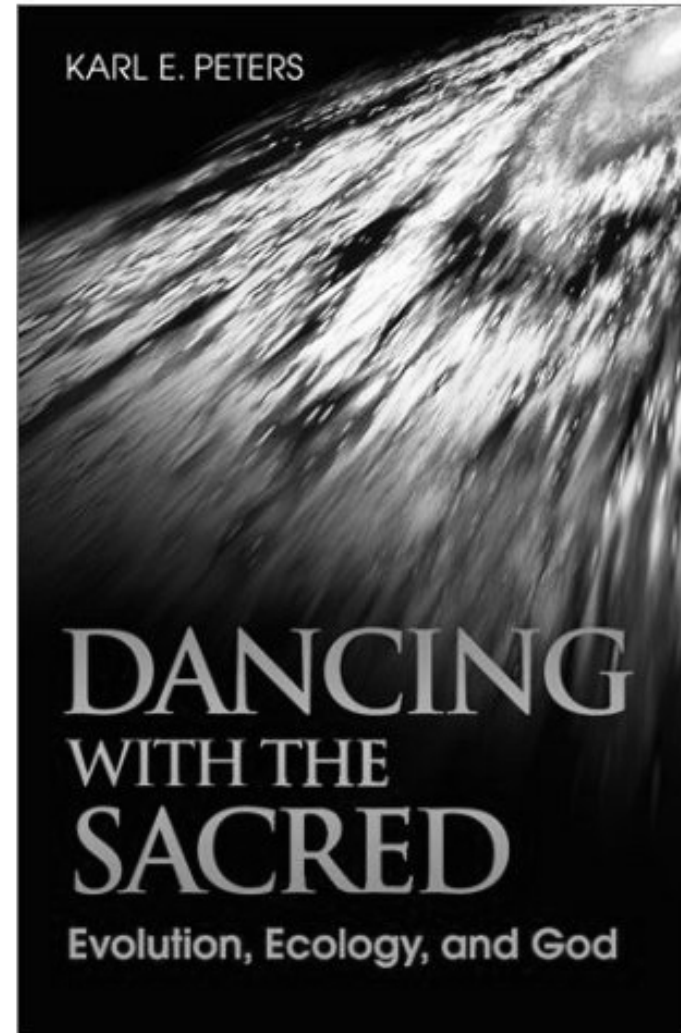
- world is a self-contained system
- world can be perceived and appreciated with a religious sensibility

Rev. Jerome Stone's Divisions



Karl Peters

- God is the power behind serendipitous creativity
- random variation = Spirit
- Natural selection = Logos

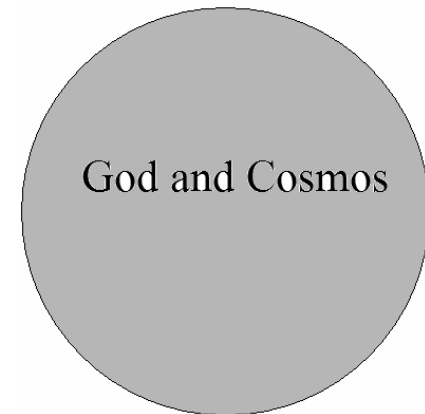




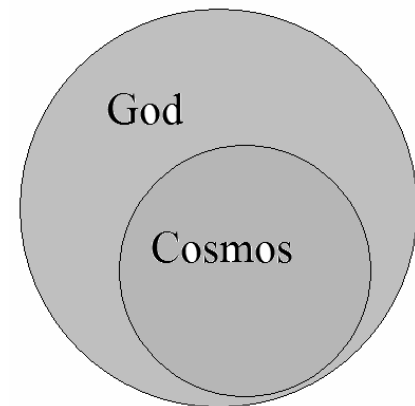
Bernard Loomer, Size of God

- Pantheism: God and the cosmos are identical
- God is an actuality that represents the totality of the world and its possibilities
- God represents the web of life
- God is a **symbol** of ultimate values and meanings

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- Pantheism: God and the universe are identical

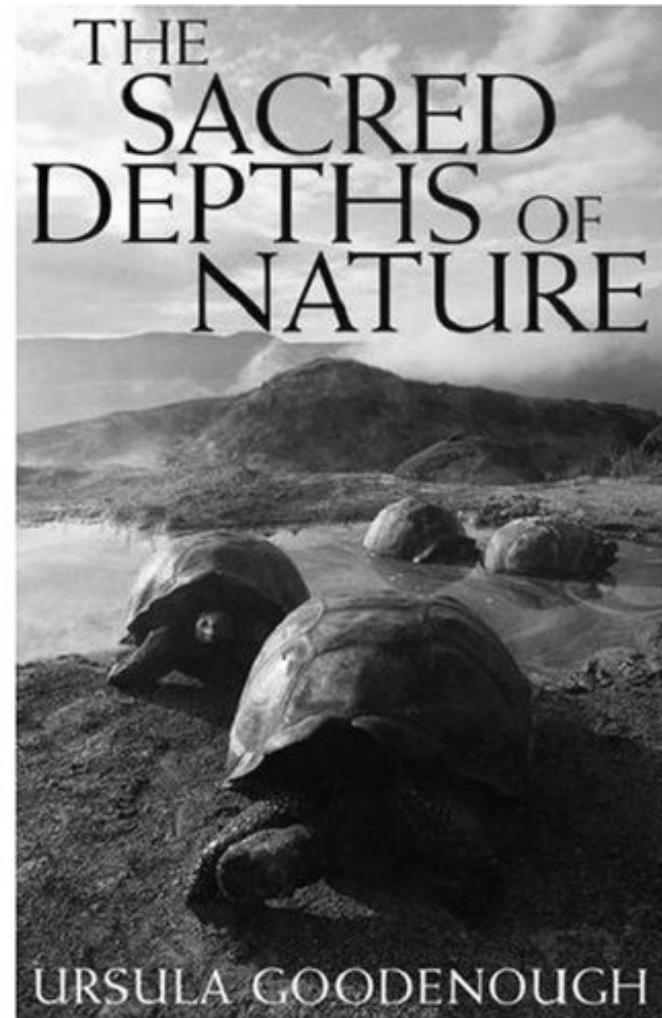


- Panenthesim: God and the universe are identical, and God is also super-natural



Ursula Goodenough

- The cosmos is all that exists; there is no need for God in it or outside it
- The natural world provides cosmology and ethics for humanity



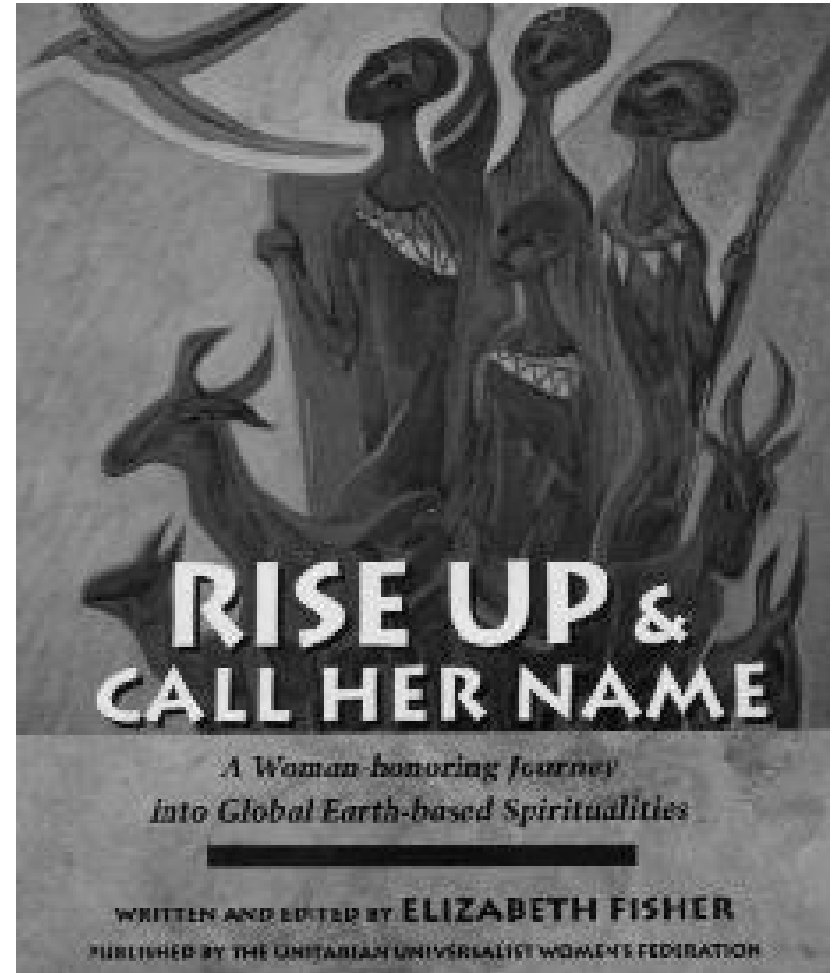


UU Feminism

- 1980s: the Great Goddess
- 1990s: the myth of the Great Goddess
- Current: the Goddess as a plural noun

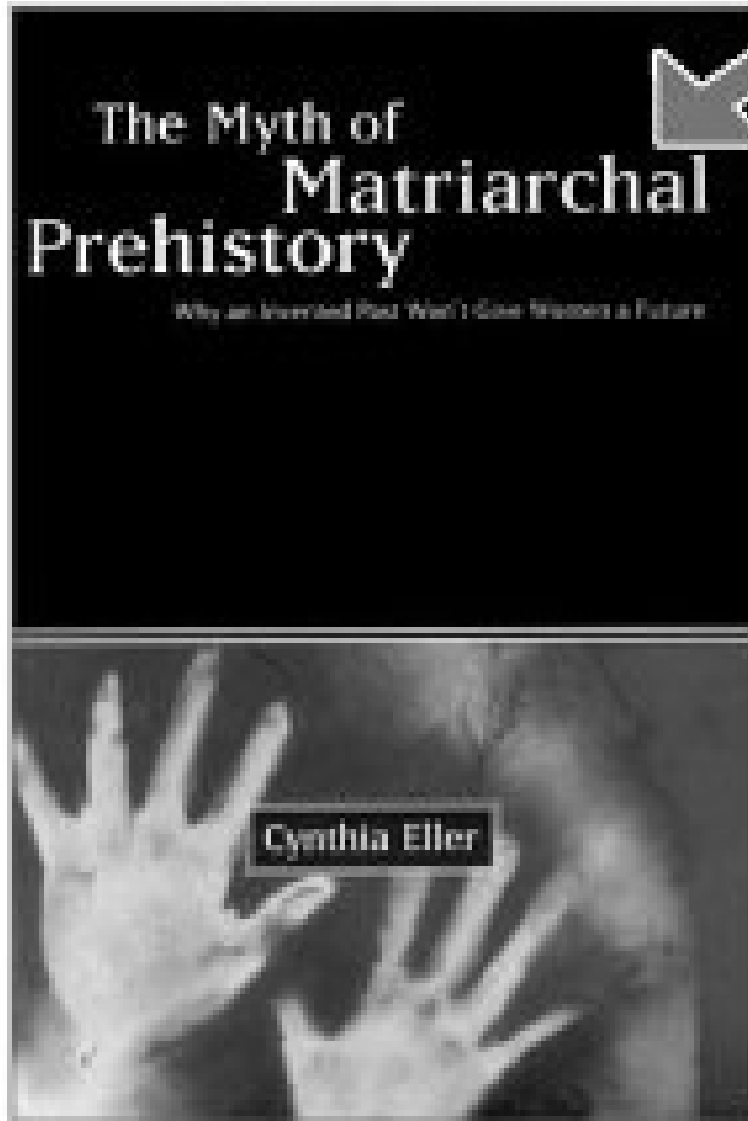
Elizabeth Fisher

- nearly all cultures from around the globe worshiped or worship Goddesses in various forms
- Spiritual growth and Goddess affirmation will happen through personal encounters that challenge one's own notions



Cynthia Eller

- the myth established an idealized archetype of the feminine that does not correspond to historical or cultural reality



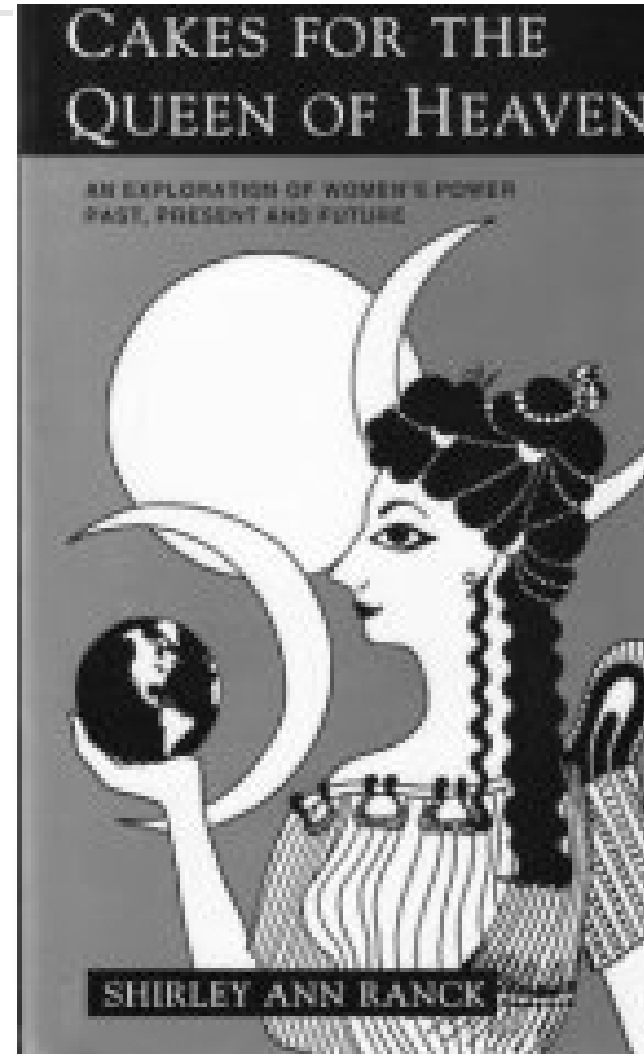


The Goddess

- inspiration and empowerment
- develop deep inner spiritual connections
- enables women to reclaim their rightful place in a sexist society
- history

Rev. Shirley Ann Ranck

- Goddess
 - inherent divinity of women (and men)
 - holiness of the body
 - validation of all human emotions
 - nurture and create
 - spirit of life
 - embodied
 - engendered
 - nature
 - Interdependence



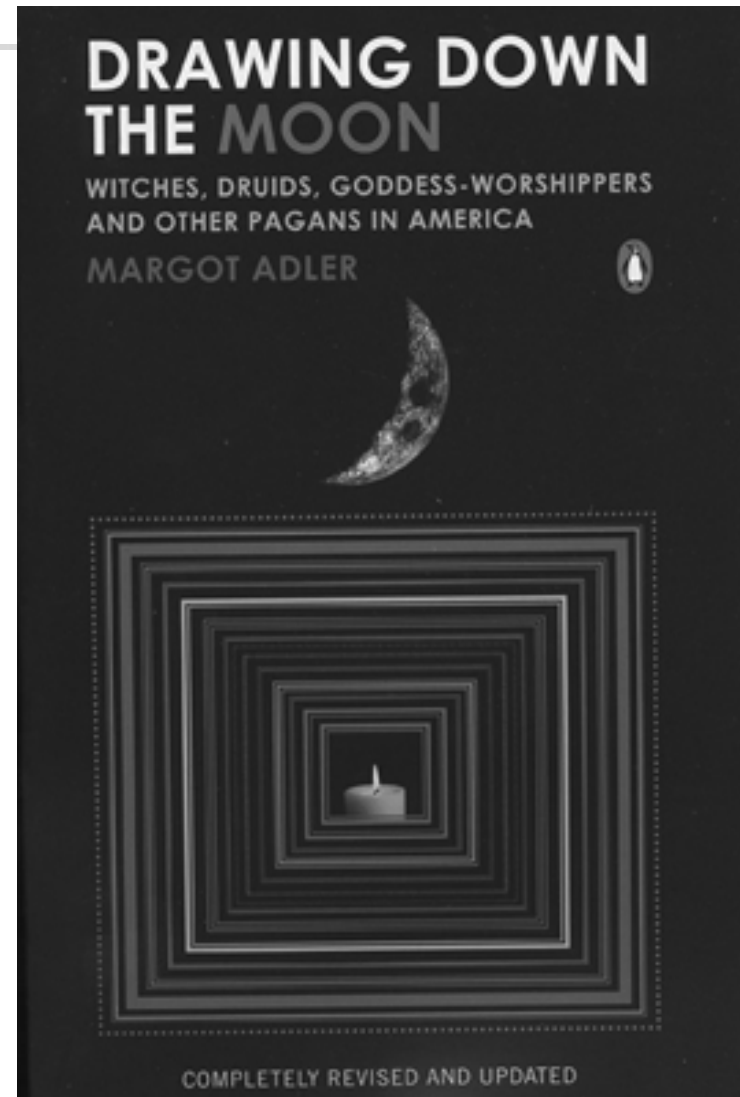


UU Paganism

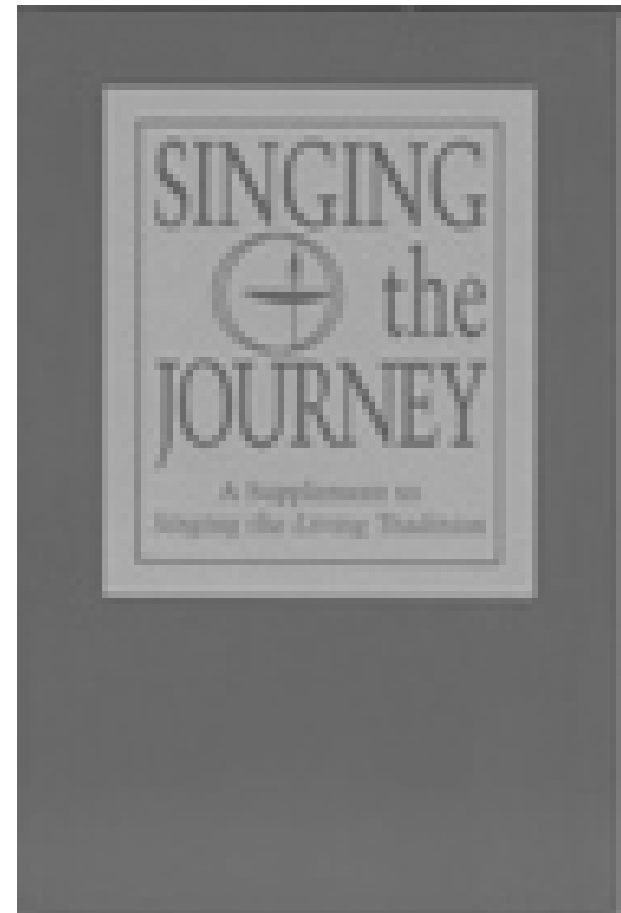
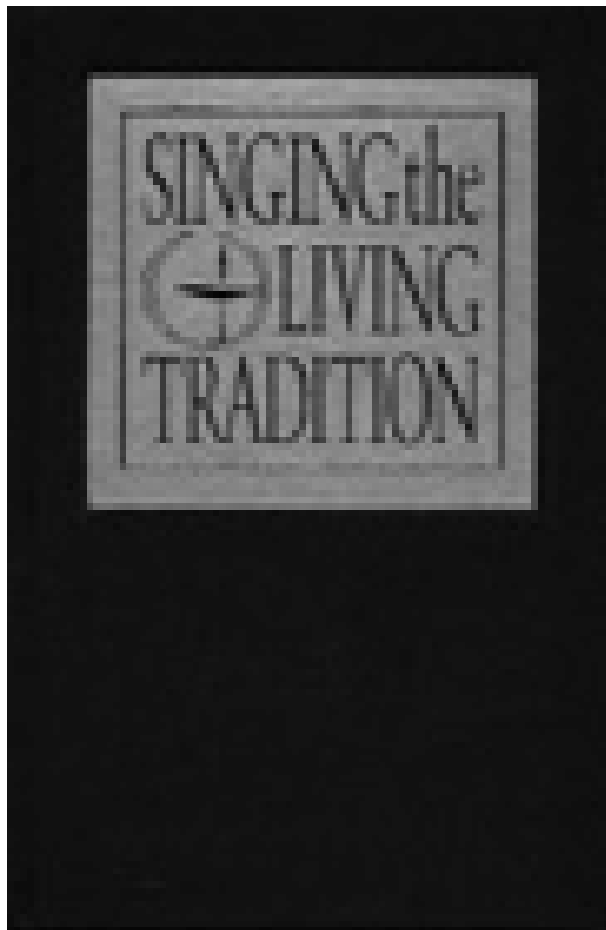
- Paganism
 - or
- Earth-centered spiritualities

Margot Adler

- Goddess spirituality
- “Paganism” waning
- Earth-centered spirituality waxing



Hymnals





Goddess, God

- energy forms, symbols, powers, archetypes, human depth, inspiration, creativity
- not theo/aology, but ritual and ethics



Rev. Joan Van Becelaere

- immanence of the divine
- Pantheism
 - divinity is identified with the material world
- Earth is sacred and alive
- Web of life
- Humans are part of nature

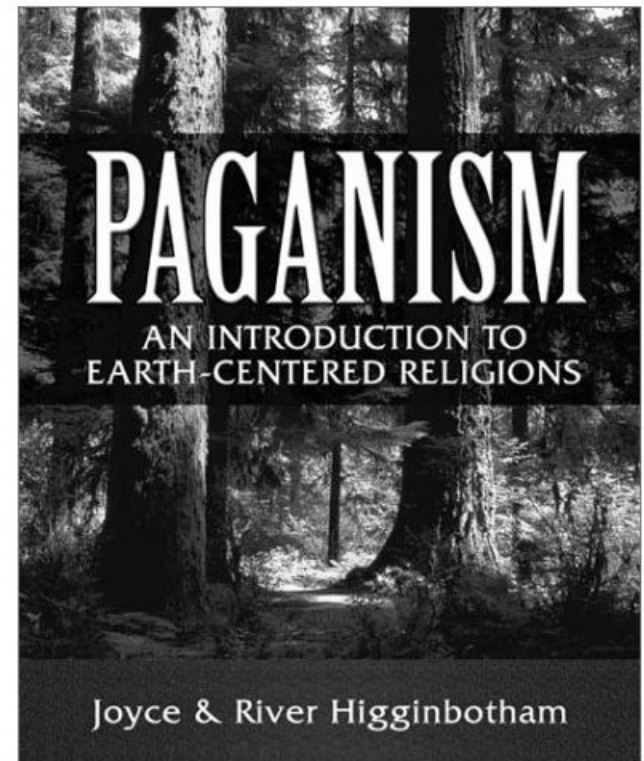


UUA Principles and Purposes

- 7th Principle:
 - Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. (added 1985)
- 6TH source:
 - Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature. (added 1995)

Joyce and River Higginbotham

- Panentheism
 - immanence of God as in pantheism coupled with a transcendent element
- A personal choice for defining one's own belief system





UU Paganism (cont.)

- The Goddess
- Plurality of Goddesses and Gods
 - diversity of experience and existence
 - natural diversity = pluralistic deity
 - vs. historical Unitarianism: there is one God (not a trinity)
 - Mort Saul: “Unitarians believe there is at most one God.”



UU Paganism (cont.)

- Ethics: environmentalism
- Ritual: transformation
- not theo/aology

How does Religious Naturalism, Goddess Spirituality, and Paganism fit together?

(The Conclusion)

Leading Idea

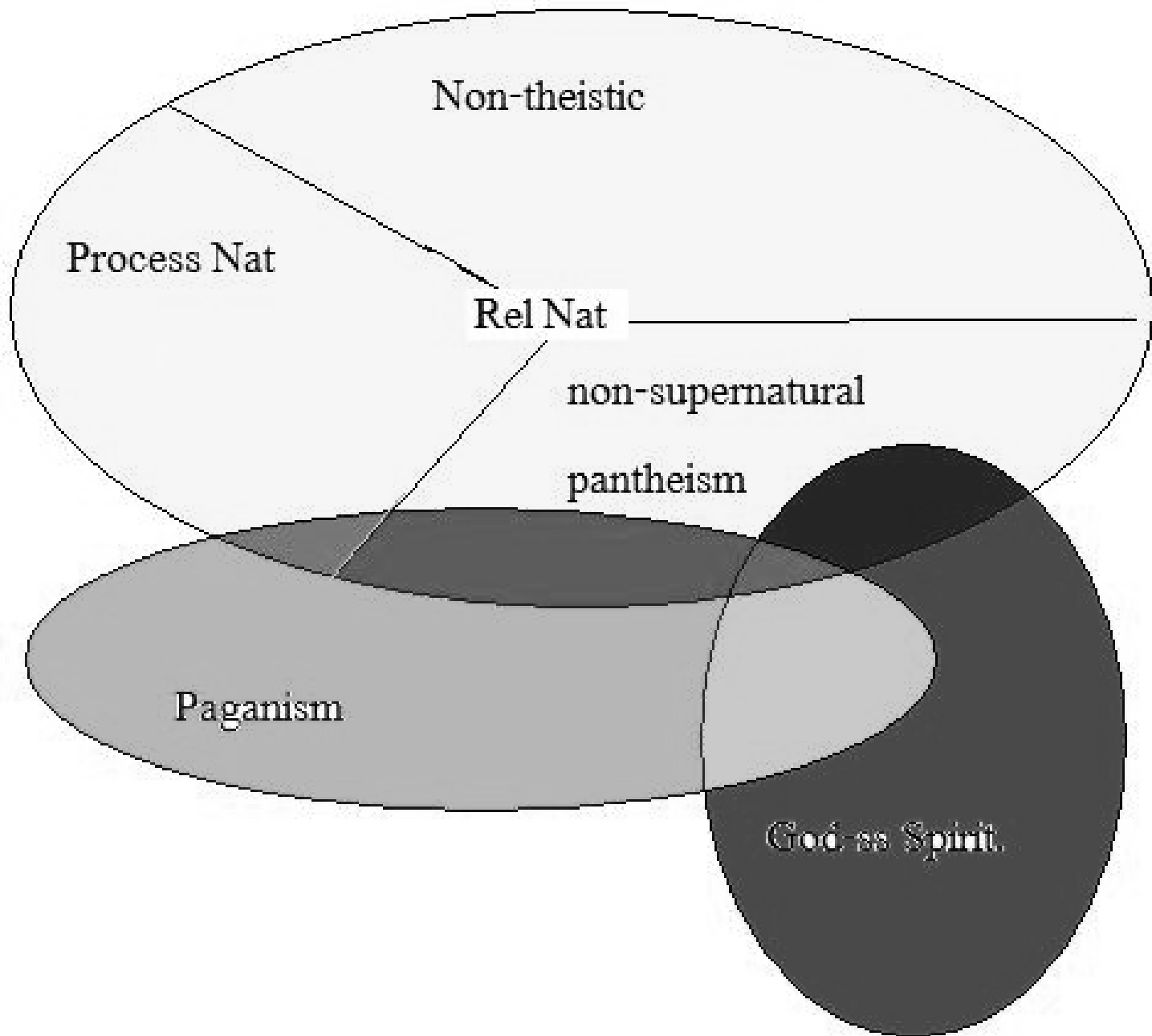
Religious Naturalism	Goddess Spirituality	Paganism/Earth-Centered
Religious reverence for the natural world, without supernatural connotations	Women and their bodies are inherently divine, connected to nature	Religious reverence for the natural world; the earth and humans are inherently divine and interconnected; harmony with nature

UU Tripod: reason, religious tradition, personal experience

Religious Naturalism	Goddess Spirituality	Paganism/Earth-Centered
Emphasizes reason	Emphasizes personal experience	Emphasizes personal experience

The Divine

Religious Naturalism	Goddess Spirituality	Paganism/Earth-Centered
Impersonal, non-anthropomorphic	The Goddess; the feminine divine	The Earth as alive, nature as holy; Goddess; God
1) creative process within the world (spirit), kept in check by natural selection (logos) (panentheistic ?)		1) emerging panentheistic possibilities
2) totality of the universe, considered religiously (pantheist)	1) the world, human beings, and in particular women's bodies; embodied, engendered, internalized; not supernatural; care for all, incl. nature	2) the world and earth with all things and beings in it (pantheist)
3) no need for theistic concept		
	2) metaphor	2) metaphor; naming the experience of nature as divine



Religious practice

Religious Naturalism	Goddess Spirituality	Paganism/Earth-Centered
Study and appreciation of nature	Ritual to celebrate humans, esp. women, with their bodies and to connect to the cycles of nature	Ritual to connect humans to nature and its seasonal cycles

Religious Response (Ethics)

Religious Naturalism	Goddess Spirituality	Paganism/Earth-Centered
Environmental ethics	Feminism, environmental ethics, eco-justice	Environmental ethics